DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 444 373 FL 026 365

AUTHOR	Minami, Masahiko
TITLE	Vocabulary Development in Bilingual and Language Minority Children.
PUB DATE	1999-10-15
NOTE	27p.; Paper presented at the National Conference on Heritage Languages in American (Long Beach, CA, October 15, 1999).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Bilingualism; Elementary School Students; Elementary Secondary Education; *English (Second Language); Evaluation; *Immigrants; *Japanese; *Japanese Americans; Language Minorities; Language Tests; Native Speakers; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning; Testing; *Vocabulary Development
IDENTIFIERS	Japanese Speaking

ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationship between English and Japanese in bilingual children. The Bilingual Verbal Ability Tests (BVATs) were administered to 40 children of Japanese heritage and their mothers residing in the San Francisco Bay Area. All the subjects were either enrolled in bilingual programs in public elementary schools or attending Japanese language courses on weekends. The tests were administered to measure the children's English language proficiency and bilingual verbal ability (verbal cognitive ability in English and Japanese combined), and to predict the children's academic progress. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The study found that it is essential for bilingual children to raise the level of their first language ability to such an extent that their literacy skills in Japanese and English will be able to produce mutually accelerated progress effects. The study also revealed that Japanese was the dominant language for those parents who grew up in Japan, whereas English was dominant for many of their children. Specifically, bilingual children used Japanese mainly in interacting with their parents, while they tended to prefer speaking English in all other settings, such as at school and interacting with siblings. Overall, it was found that Japanese families demonstrate a successful case of balanced bilingualism. Unlike most other immigrant children, where over time English comes to displace the family's first language in children, families of Japanese heritage have been successful in promoting lasting bilingualism. (Contains 20 references.) (KFT)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

Running Head: VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

ED 444 373

Vocabulary Development in Bilingual and Language Minority Children

Masahiko Minami

San Francisco State University

Author's Address: Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures
College of Humanities
San Francisco State University
1600 Holloway Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94132

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Maschiko Minami

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Abstract

This study explores two linguistically alternative options--English and Japanese--available to children from bilingual or immigrant homes. The Bilingual Verbal Ability Tests (BVAT) were administered, in order to: (1) measure children's English language proficiency, (2) measure children's bilingual verbal ability (i.e., verbal cognitive ability in English and Japanese combined), and (3) predict children's academic progress. Both qualitative and quantitative analyses were performed to better understand the relationship between English and Japanese in bilingual children. The study has revealed that it is essential for bilingual children to raise the level of their first language ability to such an extent that their literacy skills in Japanese and English will be able to produce mutually accelerated progress effects. The study has also revealed that Japanese is the dominant language for Japanese parents who are originally from Japan, whereas English is the dominant language for many of their children. Specifically, (1) interacting with their Japanese parents, bilingual children try to speak Japanese; (2) on the other hand, in school settings or even when interacting with their siblings, bilingual children prefer speaking English. Overall, the findings of this study seem to indicate that the Japanese families demonstrate a successful case of balanced bilingualism. Unlike the pattern commonly observed in immigrant families in the United States where children's first language is likely to be replaced with English, the families of Japanese heritage observed in this study seem to have been successful in promoting their children's bilingualism.

Vocabulary Development in Bilingual and Language Minority Children

Language represents one of the most important forms of human symbolic behavior. Language also serves as a key component of an individual's social identity. Each individual simultaneously belongs to multiple groups (e.g., family, school, company) and may have plural identities. A good example to illustrate this multiplicity or plurality is bilingual individuals. Although positive aspects associated with being bilingual seem to exist, the negative aspects have been emphasized. For example, it is often said that bilingual children show vocabulary scores in each language that are below normal, particularly during the preschool years. This tendency suggests that bilinguals who have acquired two languages at the same time from birth need to learn almost twice as many words simultaneously (Snow, 1998), such as "flower" in English and "hana" in Japanese.

In this study,[1] I take a sociocultural approach to bilingualism, i.e., how two languages are used in various social settings, such as home and school. Certain issues need to be clarified to develop my discussion, however. First, I am interested in language proficiency--particularly vocabulary development--which tends to have been neglected in sociolinguistics, although it has been considered important in other disciplines such as foreign language teaching. Second, while a sociocultural approach might be associated with a qualitative examination of bilingualism, I believe that both qualitative and quantitative (i.e., statistical) approaches are complementary. To deepen the understanding of bilingualism, I try to bring together qualitative and quantitative insights into sociocultural research. That is, I offer quantitative support for the results obtained from the qualitative analysis.

In many bilingual and multilingual societies, a language shift in immigrant families takes place rapidly, with a prevalent pattern of a total shift to the dominant or prestige language within two to four generations (Fishman, 1991). At an individual level, a language shift is often much faster. Blum-Kulka (1997) writes:

> In the United States, children who emigrated from other countries at the age of 3 acquired productive dominance in English within two years and at the age of 6 could hardly speak their native tongue, even in homes where the parents continued to speak the native language. (p. 221).

If the majority of language minority children in the United States could not speak their mother tongue fluently or had simply forgotten it very quickly, then, it would be a sad reality.

In the field of education, too, researchers, policymakers, administrators, the public, and those actively involved in bilingual programs have been engaged in heated discussions for and against bilingual education. A general sentiment throughout the United States, though, is that language-minority children should use as little of the home language as possible, the assumption being that this choice will lead to quicker proficiency in English (Huddy & Sears, 1990).

The widely accepted theory behind bilingualism, however, claims otherwise, i.e., children do better if they can develop their first-language proficiency while becoming fluent in English (Genesee, 1994). A variety of research findings in the late 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s, refute the arguments against bilingual education. Cummins (1986) has long examined the pattern of minority students' academic success and failure and stressed ways in which educators can promote the empowerment of minority students and their parents and communities so that these children can become confident and capable in academic environments. For example, Cummins (1991) suggests that although children may pick up oral proficiency in a couple of years, it may take several years to acquire the language skills necessary to function successfully in an all-English classroom (note, however, that such estimates might reflect the high end of the range because young children's second language acquisition, while they are young, is relatively slow and inefficient).

To represent the above-described two separate skills--context-embedded oral communicative skills and context-reduced school language skills--Cummins (1980)

originally proposed Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). BICS is the communicative capacity to function well in everyday interpersonal/social contexts and thus to be acquired naturally without formal schooling. On the other hand, CALP is related to the higher-level language skills required for cognitively demanding content such as literacy, thus representing those aspects of language proficiency that emerge and become distinctive with formal schooling. If we follow Cummins's argument, then, Blum-Kulka's (1997) description of those immigrant children who acquire productive dominance in English within two years might merely portray their relatively rapid mastery of BICS, but not CALP.

Cummins's argument, however, has stirred controversy, and he revised his argument accordingly. First of all, because social language development is closely related to the later development of academic language skills, BICS and CALP should be regarded as constituting a continuum rather than separate categories. Cummins later dropped this BICS-CALP discussion and now uses the term Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP).

CUP, as a mater of fact, has further important implications. Because most of the learning that goes on in the native language transfers readily to a second language, transfer of academic knowledge from the first language to a second language in an educational context is highly probable. That is, first-language and second-language proficiency are interdependent, and a strong native language foundation acts as a support in the learning of English, making the process easier and faster (Cummins, 1991; Cummins, Swain, Nakajima, Handscombe, Green, & Tran, 1984; Williams & Snipper, 1990). Referring to a similar concept, other researchers (e.g., Snow, 1990; Snow, Cancino, De Temple, & Schley, 1991) claim that once decontextualization skills have been acquired in one's first language, they are available for use in a second language; i.e., once the basic principles of reading are mastered in the first language, such reading skills transfer quickly to a second language.

A second controversy is Cummins's heavy reliance on test scores in his analysis of the social and cognitive nature of children's language skills. According to Edelsky (1991), while advocating the empowerment of minority students, Cummins is, in reality, using culturally biased conventional test scores to measure their academic progress. Edelsky claims that what Cummins is measuring has nothing to do with how minority children have, in a true sense, become confident and capable in academic environments. Edelsky thus concludes that Cummins's ideal and practice are contradictory and antinomic.

It is true that standardized tests do not necessarily serve as an accurate or fair measure of language-minority students' diverse strengths (Edelsky, 1991; McCloskey & Enright, 1992). Yet, as Cummins emphasizes, the role of educators and policymakers should be to empower minority students. As Collier (1992) argues, ignoring minority students' performance on standardized tests means nothing but denying those students "access to a meaningful education and equal opportunity to benefit in life from their education" (p. 194). Therefore, the important issues in bilingualism in general and bilingual education in particular include: (1) how proficiency in the bilingual individual's two languages should be defined and evaluated, and (2) what we can learn from the assessment of bilingual children's native- and second-language proficiency.

Method

Participants

Selection of Participants

The sample of the study contains forty children of Japanese heritage and their mothers residing in the multilingual San Francisco area. All of the subjects involved in this study were either enrolled in bilingual programs in public elementary schools or attending Japanese language classes on weekends. They were selected through the snowball technique, i.e., the mothers of the candidate subjects and school teachers whom we contacted helped us to find others. The appointment to meet the subject was made by phone, and a member of our research team visited the subject's home, became acquainted

with the subject and his or her mother, and explained the research plan. As specified in a consent form made by the principal investigator, the mothers gave us permission to tape, provided that the data would be used only for professional purposes and that privacy would be guarded. Accordingly, all the names in this study are pseudonyms.

Materials:

Bilingual Verbal Ability Tests (BVAT)

The Bilingual Verbal Ability Tests (BVAT) were administered to measure children's bilingual verbal ability. The BVAT, which reflects the ideas of Cummins--particularly the notion of CALP, was developed by researchers, educators, and classroom teachers who are carrying the actual teaching load (Muñnoz-Sandoval, Cummins, Alvarado, & Ruef, 1998). The major objective of the BVAT is, therefore, to measure the unique combination of cognitive and academic language abilities possessed by bilingual individuals in English and another language (e.g., Japanese in this case).

Like other intelligence tests, the BVAT measures two distinct components of general intelligence: (1) fluid intelligence, which underlies the basic organizing functions in behavior, especially in performing unusual tasks, and (2) crystallized intelligence, which applies to the skills explicitly valued in society, especially those taught in school (note that crystallized intelligence is closely related to CALP). Most problems that people have to solve are considered to require a combination of the two types of intelligence.

Specifically, the BVAT contains three sections to measure different aspects of verbal cognitive ability: (1) picture vocabulary, (2) oral vocabulary, and (3) verbal analogies. The picture vocabulary task is at a single-word level that requires the subject to name a pictured object. This expressive task is arranged by presenting familiar vocabulary (e.g., star, shoe, spoon) then gradually moving to less familiar vocabulary (e.g., stethoscope, pendulum, turnstile). This task primarily measures crystallized intelligence, and testing continues until the subject makes errors in eight consecutive responses.

The oral vocabulary task examines knowledge of word meanings. The task is further divided into two subsections: synonyms (in which the subject is expected to answer with a word similar in meaning to the word presented) and antonyms (in which the subject is expected to answer with a word opposite in meaning to the word presented). Examples of synonyms include: angry-mad, small-little, and look-see. Examples of antonyms are: no-yes, out-in, and happy-sad. Like the picture vocabulary task, the oral vocabulary task, which becomes increasingly difficult, primarily measures crystallized intelligence, and testing continues until the child makes errors in six consecutive responses.

The verbal analogies task measures verbal reasoning. The subject is expected to comprehend and verbally complete a logical word relationship, such as "Hungry is to eat, as tired is to ...." Like the other two tasks described above, the verbal analogies task becomes increasingly complex. Unlike the other two tasks, however, this task is expected to measure not only crystallized intelligence but also fluid intelligence (i.e., reasoning). Testing continues until the subject makes errors in eight consecutive responses.

The BVAT was originally developed to measure an individual's knowledge in English (L_2) and the first language (i.e., Japanese in our research), with an aim to yield a best estimate of that individual's verbal ability. The developers of the BVAT (Muñnoz-Sandoval, Cummins, Alvarado, & Ruef, 1998) claim that the vocabulary size should be regarded as the total of (1) the amount of vocabulary available in English and (2) the amount of vocabulary that does not exist in English but is available in the first language. As a general procedure, the English BVAT is administered first, followed by the other language, to examine whether the subject possesses a vocabulary item that he or she has missed in English.

Data Collection and Procedure

Taping and Questionnaire. One of our research team members visited the subject and his or her family once or twice. A questionnaire was completed during the interviewer's first visit to the family. The purpose of the questionnaire was to collect

background information on the subject and the subject's parents. For the subject, the requested information included the birth date and place, birth order, gender, and the language exposure. If the child was born overseas, the length of residence in the United States was also asked. For the subject's parents, the requested information included the country of origin, education, the language or languages spoken at home, and present occupation. Immigrant parents were asked about the length of residence in the United States as well.

The mothers were further asked a series of open-ended questions about language use and literacy practices (i.e., the use of English and Japanese), such as (1) whether the parents planned for their children to grow up bilingual, (2) whether they have been using both English and Japanese with their children at home, (3) what difficulties, they have encountered in maintaining the secondary language (either English or Japanese), and (4) how they estimate the children's proficiency in the secondary language (either English or Japanese).

BVAT. The BVAT was administered to: (1) measure an individual child's English language proficiency, (2) measure a child's bilingual verbal ability (i.e., verbal cognitive ability in English and Japanese combined), and (3) predict a child's academic progress. Although the standard procedure, which was described previously, might present a more complete picture of verbal ability than the conventional procedure (which solely relies on English verbal ability), we decided to use the BVAT in a slightly different manner than had originally been intended. Specifically, unlike the standard procedure, we asked the subjects to answer all the items both in English and Japanese, so that we could also identify, among the vocabulary that is available in English, what kinds of vocabulary are not available in the subject's first language, Japanese.

The subjects were administered the BVAT to evaluate their verbal cognitive ability in the late spring or early summer of 1999, not at the beginning of a the school year. To solve this problem, the school year was divided into tenths. For example, if a third-grade

child was tested on March 20, his or her testing date falls in the seventh of the school year. Thus, his or her grade placement was recorded as 3.7.

The BVAT reports five levels of CALP to help describe the subject's language proficiency in English: Level 5 (advanced CALP in English), 4 (fluent), 3 (limited), 2 (very limited), and 1 (negligible). For instance, when compared with other children of the same grade, a Level 4 individual demonstrates fluent cognitive academic language proficiency. That is, if provided with English instruction at the subject's corresponding grade level, it is expected that a Level 4 child will find the language demands of the learning tasks manageable.

Results

Analysis

BVAT: Disparity between the scores in the two languages

The purposes of using the BVAT include: obtaining an assessment of the children's (1) relative verbal abilities in English and (2) relative proficiency in the two languages, and predicting (3) the children's academic progress. Although I did not intend to use the BVAT diagnostically, the obtained results are suggestive of how to raise bilingual children.

Contrasting Cases: Natsuko, Taichi, and Takashi

In this section, three bilingual children are described; they all arrived in the United States at age four or five and have resided here for four or five years. Two children seem to be very successful, whereas one does not necessarily appear so. As can be seen below, one of the key factors for becoming a successful bilingual seems to be whether a variety of books are available at home.

Name: Natsuko

Grade: 5.7

Age: 10 years, 9 months

Sex: Female

Natsuko's first language is Japanese. Her parents are both native speakers of Japanese from Japan. At home, Natsuko speaks only Japanese. Natsuko's mother says that she has done nothing special to make her children bilingual. As is almost always the case, however, when Natsuko talks with her younger sister Asami, they speak English (when quarreling especially). When Asami does not understand what her parents have said, Natsuko serves as a translator/interpreter. This is good for raising one's metalinguistic awareness, i.e., the ability to reflect on the nature of language and its use (Berko Gleason & Bernstein Ratner, 1998).

To improve one's English, one has to use effective strategies. One of the keys to success lies in reading books (and watching many TV programs in English), which is related to cultural literacy explained later. According to Natsuko's mother, Natsuko has no problem in English because she and her younger sister read many books (their vocabulary sizes are still smaller compared to those of English-speaking children of their corresponding ages, though).

Considering the fact that Natsuko has been in the United States for 5 years and 8 months (which means that, arriving in the United States at age five, she has been exposed to English at school for 5 years and 8 months), her advanced English proficiency (CALP Level 5) is very impressive (her younger sister also demonstrated CALP Level 5). Collier (1987) claims that five-, six-, and seven-year-old arrivals in the United States, because of limited literacy skills in their first language, tend not to adequately acquire English academic skills compared to older arrivals who can transfer their knowledge of reading from their native language to reading in English. Collier's (1987) hypothesis, however, does not seem to hold in the case of Natsuko. That is, when compared to native English speakers at her age level, Natsuko's English language proficiency is superior. The BVAT predicts that Natsuko will find the English language demands of age-level tasks very easy. Amazingly, the BVAT results demonstrate that Natsuko's English language proficiency is comparable to that of the average English-speaking individual at age 18;8 (i.e., 18 years and 8 months).

Natsuko's verbal cognitive ability in English is in the very superior range of ability for her age. The BVAT reports that Natsuko performs age-level cognitive-academic language tasks with 99% success. The BVAT also reports that Natsuko's verbal cognitive ability in English and Japanese combined does not seem to be significantly higher than her English language proficiency alone. This result, however, seems misleading because Natsuko is already at the very high end in her English proficiency alone, and there is little room for improvement even if her Japanese proficiency is included.

Name: Taichi

Grade: 2.7

Age: 8 years, 0 month

Sex: Male

Taichi's first language is Japanese. At home, his parents try to encourage him to speak Japanese; they have established a rule that, whereas English is allowed outside their home, Japanese remains the main language at home. Thanks to his parents' consistent encouragement and determination, Taichi has also had opportunities to read a great number of books in Japanese.

Yet, he still mixes English and Japanese particularly when he talks with his younger sister (recall Natsuko's case described previously). This compounding, which seems inevitable because he lives in English-speaking U.S. society, has both positive and negative aspects. As a positive aspect, Taichi's mother reports that his command of English is probably even more advanced than that of native English-speaking children of his age. A negative aspect, on the other hand, is that English has been Taichi's dominant language for the last one year. Thus, these positive and negative aspects are two sides of the same coin.

Having cultural knowledge seems important to improve literacy skills. Taichi's parents, who are both native speakers of Japanese from Japan, consider that maintaining Japanese is more important than promoting his English proficiency. Their preference for

Japanese over English, however, does not mean that they do not consider Taichi's English literacy skills development important. On the contrary, they are also concerned about his English capability because his parents do not have sufficient cultural knowledge, such as U.S. history, old TV shows, and songs.

Literacy is broken down into multiple levels (Williams & Snipper, 1990). Functional literacy, which indicates the minimum skills, such as the ability to read signs on the street or at the railroad station, is a rudimentary necessity for an individual to function in everyday life in a given society. Cultural literacy, which emphasizes cultural ties and traditions in a given society, is more advanced but necessary knowledge for an individual to live in a given society as a resident rather than a traveler. Unfortunately, immigrant parents (like Taichi's parents) may not have such knowledge.

Yet, Taichi's English language proficiency is superior when compared to native English speakers at his age level. Taichi demonstrated advanced English proficiency (CALP Level 5). Taichi's English language proficiency is comparable to that of the average English-speaking individual at age 11;0, far above his age level (which confirms that Taichi's mother's evaluation is correct). The BVAT predicts that Taichi will continue to find the English language demands of age-level tasks very easy. His command of English skills is impressive although he has been in the United States for four years and one month (which means that he came to the United States at age four). Like Natsuko, Taichi's advanced English skills seem to contradict Collier's (1987) hypothesis on ages of arrival. Also, the cases of Natsuko and Taichi seem to contradict Cummins's (1991) hypothesis on children's slow L_2 acquisition in terms of CALP.

Taichi's bilingual verbal cognitive ability (i.e., verbal cognitive ability in English and Japanese combined) is not significantly higher than would be estimated by verbal ability tests administered in English alone. In English, Taichi performs age-level cognitive-academic language tasks with 98% success. When using his verbal cognitive ability in English and Japanese combined, he can perform such tasks with 99% success, a mere one

percent increment. This result is somewhat misleading, however. Like Natsuko, because Taichi has almost reached the ceiling in his English proficiency alone, even with his excellent Japanese skills, there is almost no room to improve.

Name: Takashi

Grade: 5.7

Age: 11 years, 1 month

Sex: Male

Takashi's mother is concerned about Takashi's English skills development because (1) Japanese is the main language at their home and (2) she and her husband are both native speakers of Japanese from Japan. Similar concerns were reported by other mothers in this study whose husbands are Japanese, probably because there is no division of labor in terms of maintenance and development of the two languages (see Ryu's case that will appear later). This concern is particularly connected with the child's academic achievement at school. As the child's grade advances, homework assignments (in English) become difficult. Takashi's parents help him write sentences in English, consulting a dictionary. Yet, they are not sure that the sentences they have helped Takashi write are grammatically correct. Takashi demonstrated a CALP Level 3-4 (limited to fluent), which seems to support Takashi's mother's concern. Although Takashi came to the Unites States at age five and has been in an English-speaking community for more than five years, he still has limited English proficiency. In contrast to Natsuko and Taichi, Takashi's BVAT score seems to support Cummins's (1991) claim that it may take five to seven years to acquire CALP skills. Unlike Natsuko and Taichi, Takashi's case also seems to support Collier's (1987) claim about ages of arrival.

The above situation does not necessarily indicate that Takashi's Japanese is advanced. Even though he can speak everyday Japanese (which corresponds to BICS), when it comes to literacy skills (i.e., CALP), that is another story. Takashi's mother feels that his Japanese is still the equivalent of early graders. Takashi particularly lacks cultural

literacy in Japanese. For instance, Takashi does not have the vocabulary indicating a Japanese-style closet because such a closet is not available in the United States. The mother took pains to explain it; after a long attempt, when she finally explained to Takashi that a Japanese-style closet is a place where Doraemon (a popular cat-shaped robot that appears in a TV cartoon show) sleeps, Takashi understood what kind of thing it was.

Takashi's mother has thus worked hard to maintain his first language, Japanese. She has sent him to weekend tutorial programs, first to a Japanese Saturday school and now to Kinmon Gakuen in San Francisco. At home, she tries to talk to him in Japanese. Whenever he wants to express difficult things or concepts, however, he resorts to speaking English, to which his mother succumbs, and their conversation consequently shifts to English. As a matter of fact, similar language shifts--a move from one language to another known as code-switching--were reported by many mothers in this study.

As mentioned previously, the BVAT has revealed that, when compared to native English speakers at his age level, Takashi's English language proficiency is average (CALP Level 3-4). This assessment predicts that Takashi will find the English language demands of age-level tasks difficult. Takashi's verbal cognitive ability in English and Japanese combined is in the average range for his age. In English, Takashi performs age-level cognitive-academic language tasks with 79 percent success. When using his verbal cognitive ability in English and Japanese combined, he can perform such tasks with 84 percent success, i.e., a five percent increment, which is much larger compared to other children in the sample.

Parental Concerns

Many parents in this study often reported their needless concerns about their bilingual children's development in the two languages. Here, three children are described who are all successful in both English and Japanese. In terms of English proficiency, one child is considered fluent to advanced, whereas two are categorized as fluent. Also, all of them can perform language-related tasks with great success, when using their verbal

cognitive ability in English and Japanese combined. Thus, maintaining the individual's first language does not retard the development of a second language; conversely, becoming fluent in a second language does not have to mean losing the first language.

Name: Asuka

Grade: 5.7

Age: 11 years, 1 month

Sex: Female

Asuka's mother feels that when comparing the two languages--English and Japanese--Asuka seems have problems with English for a variety of reasons: (1) Asuka's family exclusively speak Japanese at home; (2) Asuka's parents do not speak perfect English; and (3) Asuka does not have many opportunities to speak with English-speaking adults who can provide her with full-fledged, grammatically correct, well-formed English sentences. Asuka's mother's concern is a legitimate one, when considering that language development and literacy development form a continuum, i.e., from BICS to CALP. Asuka's mother is particularly concerned about Asuka's vocabulary development.

Fortunately, however, Asuka has demonstrated fluent to advanced English proficiency (CALP Level 4-5). Asuka's English language proficiency is comparable to that of the average English-speaking individual at age 12;10 (i.e., 12 years and 10 months), which indicates that tasks requiring English language ability below the age 10;7 level will be quite easy for Asuka.

In English, Asuka performs age-level cognitive-academic language tasks with 96% success. When using her bilingual cognitive ability, she can perform such tasks with 98% success, a mere two percent increment. But this result seems reasonable because Asuka has almost hit the ceiling with her English proficiency alone.

Name: Masaaki

Grade: 3.7

Age: 9 years, 1 month

Sex: Male

Masaaki's first language is Japanese. At home, he mainly speaks Japanese. As a matter of fact, a friend of his mother suggested to Masaaki's parents not to speak "strange" English at home. Masaaki's parents simply followed this advice until Masaaki entered preschool. Masaaki is now a third grader, but his mother feels that both his English and Japanese are far from perfect.

Masaaki's mother seems more concerned about his English. Compared to English-speaking children of his age, Masaaki has a smaller vocabulary size. But his parents cannot help him because they are both native speakers of Japanese from Japan with limited English proficiency. Masaaki's mother reports that his classroom teacher told her that Masaaki could not write complex sentences (e.g., sentences using conjunctions). According to the classroom teacher, Masaaki's mother continues, Masaaki seems to understand what he is being said; however, because he does not ask anything even if he does not understand what is being said to him, it is somewhat difficult to measure his English comprehension level. Masaaki is thus being enrolled in an after-school program so that he can get more accustomed to English.

Luckily, however, Masaaki's mother may not need to worry so much about his English proficiency. When compared to native English speakers of his age, Masaaki's English language proficiency is average; specifically, his language proficiency is comparable to that of the average English-speaking individual at age 8;7. Masaaki demonstrated fluent English proficiency (CALP Level 4), which indicates that Masaaki will find the English language demands of age-level tasks manageable.

In English, Masaaki performs age-level cognitive-academic language tasks with 87% success. When using his bilingual verbal cognitive ability, he can perform such tasks with 92% success, a five percent increment, which, like Takashi (who was described previously), is much larger compared to other children in the sample.

Name: Kenta

Grade: 3.7

Age: 9 years, 7 months

Sex: Male

Kenta's parents, who are both native speakers of Japanese from Japan, have established a rule to speak solely Japanese at home. They also enroll him in a weekend Japanese tutorial program, believing that talking with his Japanese-speaking peers is important partly because it motivates him to maintain Japanese.

Kenta's parents' intuitive judgment seems correct because motivation factors often determine a person's desire to do something. In second-language learning in particular, learning may be affected differently by different type of motivation. Gardner and Lambert (1972) distinguish two types of motivation, which are instrumental motivation (i.e., wanting to learn a language because it will be useful for certain instrumental goals) and integrative motivation (i.e., wanting to learn a language in order to communicate with people of another culture who speak it). Kenta's case seems more closely related to integrative motivation.

Because Kenta's first language is Japanese, and because he exclusively speaks Japanese at home, his parents are concerned about his English skills development. According to Kenta's mother, although he seems to keep up with the mainstream class (in English), he is not good at understanding English sentences. Kenta's mother reports that because he likes watching Japanese videos, he did not watch English TV programs until age six (although he is now interested in them). Also, Kenta is currently receiving English tutoring.

Kenta's mother may not need to worry, however. Kenta demonstrated fluent English proficiency (CALP Level 4). Kenta's English language proficiency is comparable to that of the average English-speaking individual at age 8;10. The BVAT results show that Kenta will find the English language demands of age-level tasks manageable. In English, Kenta performs age-level cognitive-academic language tasks with 85% success. When

using his bilingual verbal cognitive ability, he can perform such tasks with 93% success, an eight percent increment, which is much larger compared to any other children in the sample. This large increment also indicates that Kenta's Japanese language skills serve as positive support for his English skills.

Division of Labor

Bilingual children's parents are not necessarily native speakers of Japanese, although I mainly focused on Japanese-speaking parents from Japan in the previous section. In the present sample, some fathers are native English speakers; in many of these families, fathers talk to their children in English, whereas mothers talk to them in Japanese. In this case, there is an explicit division of labor, as can be seen in a longitudinal study conducted by Leopold (1939-49) in which he spoke German and his wife spoke English to their daughter. This situation might be an ideal one; because each parent speaks only one language, there is no confusion of two labels at the vocabulary level in early language development, which also leads to no compounding of the two languages later.

Name: Ryu

Grade: 3.7

Age: 9 years, 2 months

Sex: Male

Ryu's father, who is a native speaker of English, speaks English to him, whereas his mother, a native speaker of Japanese, speaks Japanese to him. Ryu started attending a weekend Japanese tutorial program at age four. After that, he had the experiences of being enrolled in a preschool in Japan (in a five-year-old children's classroom) for two months and an elementary school for one semester. Since then he has been in an elementary school in Japan for a couple of months every summer (this is possible because the academic year in Japan starts in April, and the summer vacation is from mid-July to August).

Ryu's mother believes that these efforts are important because, when living in the United States, there is less and less Japanese input. Although efforts to make friends with

those who can converse in Japanese are highly recommended (to enhance an individual's integrative motivation, which was described previously), there are certain limitations as long as you live in U.S. English-speaking society. Although Ryu's mother believes that he has the ability to keep up with the classroom conducted in Japanese, she has concerns as well, such as (1) compared to Japanese children in Japan, Ryu has a smaller Japanese vocabulary size and (2) to express himself, Ryu is more likely to rely on English than Japanese. Under these circumstances, visiting Japan every summer holds a significant meaning.

Ryu demonstrated advanced English proficiency (CALP Level 5), which indicates that, when compared to native English speakers at his age level, Ryu's English language proficiency is superior. The BVAT results predict that Ryu will find the English language demands of age-level tasks very easy. More specifically, Ryu's English language proficiency is comparable to that of the average English-speaking individual at age 11;10; tasks requiring English language ability below the age 9;10 level will be quite easy for Ryu, who is, as a matter of fact, 9 years and 2 months old.

Ryu's bilingual verbal cognitive ability is also in the superior range of ability for his age. In English, Ryu performs age-level cognitive-academic language tasks with 98% success. When using his verbal cognitive ability in English and Japanese combined, he can perform such tasks with 98% success, no increment at all. This result, however, seems reasonable. Because Ryu has almost hit the ceiling in his English proficiency alone, even with his excellent Japanese skills there is almost no room to improve.

Discussion

The present study has explored two linguistically alternative options--English and Japanese--available to children from bilingual and immigrant homes. Both qualitative and quantitative analyses were performed to better understand the relationship between English and Japanese in bilingual children. The study has revealed that it is essential for bilingual children to raise the level of their first language ability to such an extent that their literacy

skills in both English and Japanese will be able to produce mutually accelerated progress effects.

The study has also revealed that Japanese is the dominant language for Japanese parents who are originally from Japan, whereas English is the dominant language for many of their children. Specifically, (1) interacting with their Japanese parents, bilingual children try to speak Japanese; (2) on the other hand, in school settings or even when interacting with their siblings, bilingual children prefer speaking English. The language preference thus seems to reveal: (1) the individual's societal orientation, integrative motivation in particular (i.e., which group the individual wants to belong to) and (2) the individual's perception of which language is appropriate in a particular context (e.g., speaking English with his or her peers and siblings but speaking Japanese with his or her parents).

Yet, we cannot help wondering why bilingual children tend to conduct conversations in two languages rather than one at home. It is often said that, in many bilingual or multilingual societies, language use is associated with two contrasting domains: an indigenous mother-tongue with more intimate settings on the one hand, and an official or prestige language with more formal settings such as school on the other. We are then curious about why, even in home settings, parents and children are likely to differ in their preferences for one language or the other.

To begin with, speaking Japanese is related to socialization. The Japanese language is not only used for the purpose of maintaining it as the primary language in the Japanese homes, but it is simultaneously used for maintenance of culture. Bilingual children in this study generally cooperate with their parents' attempts to maintain Japanese, which means that accommodation on the part of the children becomes operative. In contrast to accommodation, English is used for acculturation into U.S. society. In other words, acculturation is associated with sociability because English is the primary language in U.S. society. Sociability is important for children to interact with peers and even with siblings. Interactions even between siblings are a great way for an individual person to establish his

or her identity, serving as a preparation for life in society, which is a part of sociability. Speaking English between siblings at home makes sense in light of socialibility into U.S. society. Thus, socialization into and sociability in U.S. society is complex, particularly in bilingual homes. Families living in pluralistic societies try to balance the two components--tensions between socialization, which tries preserve the cultural heritage, on the one hand and sociability, which tries to acculturate to the dominant culture, on the other.

Lambert (1981) classified bilingualism into two types: (1) additive bilingualism, which symbolizes that children's first language is maintained and supported, and (2) subtractive bilingualism, which symbolizes that (immigrant) children's first language is replaced with a prestigious national or international language, as is frequently observed in the United States. The findings of the present study seem to indicate that the families of Japanese heritage demonstrate a successful case of additive, balanced bilingualism. English is certainly the dominant language for Japanese children living in U.S. society. Unlike the pattern commonly observed in immigrant families in the United States, however, the Japanese families observed in this study seem to have succeeded in bilingual socialization.

Although the case in the Japanese families suggests the positive effect of being bilingual, we should not forget the contribution of both the relatively high prestige of Japanese and instrumental benefits associated with high Japanese proficiency in U.S. society (i.e., instrumental motivation), particularly on the West Coast (i.e., Japanese is useful for future careers) to this success. Without these privileges, maintenance of Japanese might not have been feasible. Also, we must admit that, despite the success of additive bilingualism in which children's first language (Japanese in this case) is maintained and supported, the families of Japanese heritage cannot escape from the influence of the dominant culture in which they live.

To conclude, I would like to praise the success of bilingual socialization by the families of Japanese heritage. In spite of the fact that many parents' desperate endeavors to

maintain their heritage language and cultural heritage often end in vain, the families of Japanese heritage observed in this study seem to have been successful. Although there are possible societal and economic reasons for their success, we need to admit that it is largely attributable to both the parents' consistent efforts to maintain Japanese and their children's accommodation to this practice.

References

Berko Gleason, J. B., & Bernstein Ratner, N. (1998). Language acquisition. In J. B. Gleason & N. Bernstein Ratner (Eds.), Psycholinguistics (2nd ed.) (pp. 347-407). Fortworth, TX: Harcourt Brace.

Blum-Kulka, S. (1997). Dinner talk: Cultural patterns of sociability and socialization in family discourse. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Collier, V. P. (1987). Age and rate of acquisition of second language for academic purposes. TESOL Quarterly, 21, (4), 617-641.

Collier, V. P. (1992). A synthesis of studies examining long-term language-minority student data on academic achievement. Bilingual Research Journal, 16: 1 & 2, 187-212.

Cummins, J. (1980). The cross-lingual dimensions of language proficiency: Implications for bilingual education and optimal age issue. TESOL Quarterly, 14(2), 175-187.

Cummins, J. (1986). Empowering minority students: A framework for intervention. Harvard Educational Review, 56, (1), 18-36.

Cummins, J. (1991). Language development and academic learning. In L. M. Malavé & G. Duquette (Eds.), Language, culture and cognition (pp. 161-175). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

Cummins, J., Swain, M., Nakajima, K., Handscombe, J., Green, D., & Tran, C. (1984). Linguistic interdependence among Japanese and Vietnamese immigrant students. In C. Rivera (Ed.), Language proficiency and academic achievement (pp. 60-81). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

Edelsky, C. (1991). With literacy and justice for all. Bristol, PA: Falmer Press.

Gardner, R. C., & Lambert, W. E. (1972). Attitudes and motivation in second-language learning. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Genesee, F. (1994). (Ed.). Educating Second Language Children: The Whole Child, the Whole Curriculum, and the Whole Community. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Huddy, L., & Sears, D. O. (1990). Qualified public support for bilingual education: Some policy implications. In C. B. Cazden & C. E. Snow (Eds.), English plus: Issues in bilingual education (pp. 119-134). New Bury Park, CA: Sage.

Lambert, W. E. (1981). Bilingualism and language acquisition. In H. Winitz (Ed.), Native language and foreign language acquisition (pp. 9-22). New York: New York Academy of Science.

Leopold, W. (1939-1949). Speech development of a bilingual child: A linguist's record. 4 Vols. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

McCloskey, M. L., & Enright, D. S. (1992). America 2000: A TESOL response. TESOL Resource Packet (PP. 1-9). Alexandria, VA: TESOL.

Muñnoz-Sandoval, A. F., Cummins, J., Alvarado, C. G., & Ruef, M. L. (1998). Bilingual verbal ability tests: Comprehensive manual. Itasca, IL: Riverside Publishing.

Snow, C. E. (1990). The development of definitional skill. Journal of Child Language, 17, 697-710.

Snow, C. E. (1998). Bilingualism and second language acquisition. In J. B. Gleason & N. Bernstein Ratner (Eds.), Psycholinguistics (2nd ed.) (pp. 453-481). Fortworth, TX: Harcourt Brace.

Snow, C. E., Cancino, H., De Temple, J., & Schley, S. (1991). Giving formal definitions: A linguistic or metalinguistic skill? In E. Bialystok (Ed.), Language processing in bilingual children (pp. 90-112). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Williams, J. D., & Snipper, G. C. (1990). Literacy and bilingualism. New York: Longman.

Footnote

---

[1]. An earlier version of this paper was presented by the author at the National Conference on Heritage Languages in America, Long Beach, California, October 15, 1999. Thanks to the aid of the Research and Professional Development Support Fund from San Francisco State University, I have been able to pursue research on vocabulary development of bilingual and language minority children. By language minority children, I refer to those who come from homes where non-English languages are spoken (e.g., Japanese-speaking homes in this study). Special thanks go to the mothers and children who participated in this research project and gave time generously for the interviews. This report would not have been available without these parents' commitment to and interest in their children's first (L_1) and second (L_2) language development and maintenance in the face of overwhelming odds posed by U.S. society.